

## RECREATION MANAGEMENT AREAS



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The purpose of a recreation management area is to provide and maintain land and water areas and facilities for outdoor public recreation or education. Each separate recreation area has different goals regarding future landscape conditions, management activities, policies for protection, maintenance, enhancement, or restoration of the visual characteristics important to the recreational use of the area.

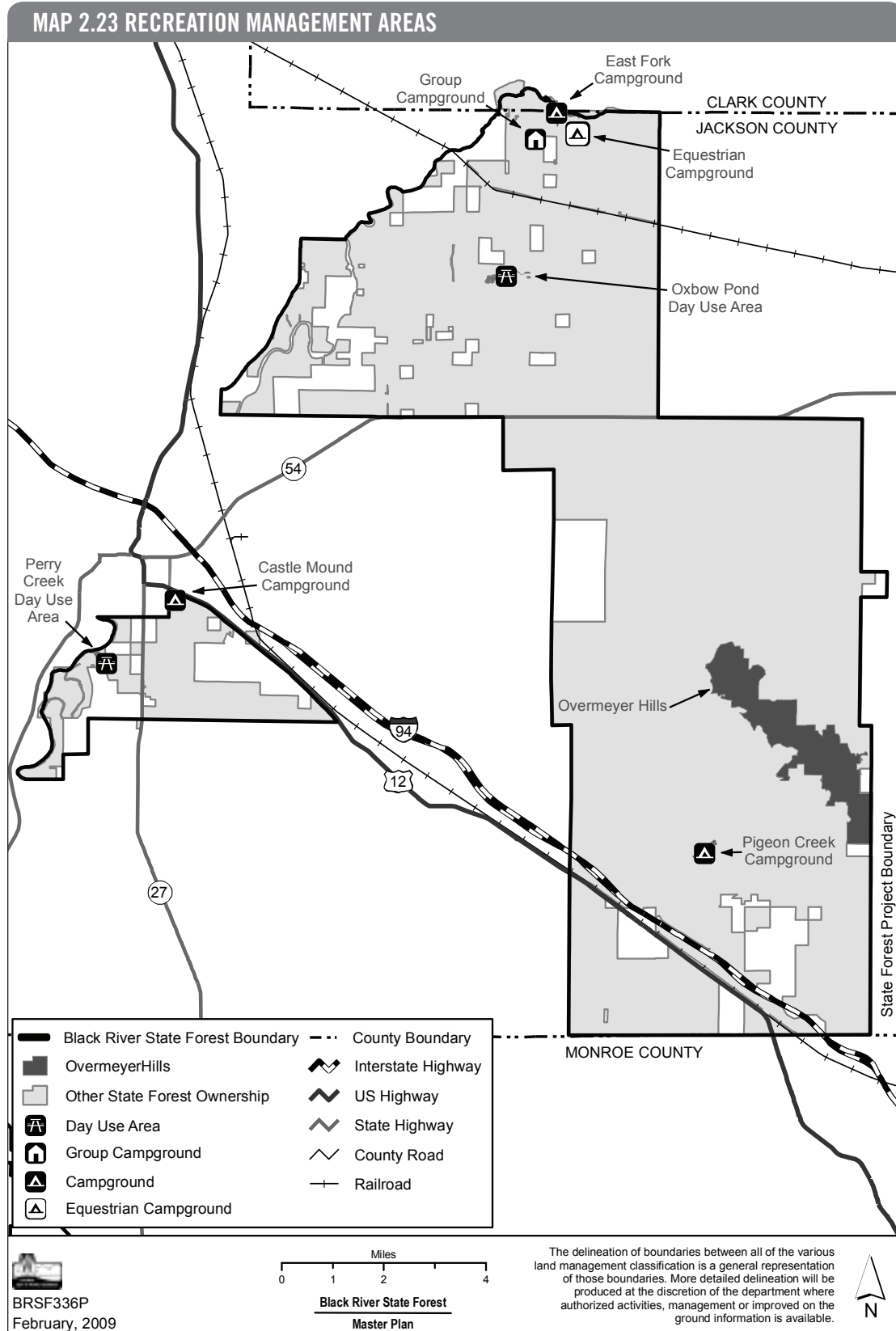
TABLE 2.22 RECREATION MANAGEMENT AREAS

Area #	Recreation Management Areas	Acres
18	Overmeyer Hills	2,241
19	Campgrounds and Day Use	155
	<b>Total</b>	<b>2,396</b>

Please refer to the General Forest Management Prescriptions on page 98 for prescriptions by forest type. These prescriptions apply and all management activities are authorized, except as noted below for these management areas.



## RECREATION MANAGEMENT AREAS





## AREA 18: OVERMEYER HILLS

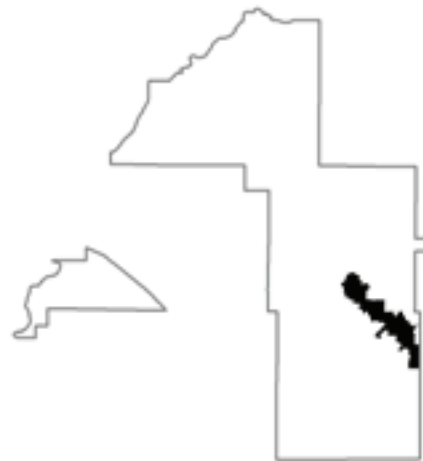
This 2,241 acre recreation management area can be accessed off of Shale Road, Smrekar Road, and North Settlement Road. The Overmeyer Hills are the most popular area of the Black River State Forest for silent sport enthusiasts. This area includes a 24 mile cross-country skiing, mountain biking, and hiking trail system that offers a variety of different activities and levels of difficulty. This area is the most popular location in the state forest for backpack camping and is considered one of the best cross-country ski destinations in the state. Much of the attraction of this area is its rugged and scenic character, with several spectacular scenic vistas located along the trail. The site is classified as a Type 3 Recreational Use Setting (NR 44.07).

In addition to providing scenic beauty and recreational opportunities, the site is also ecologically significant and diverse in topography, soils, animals, and vegetation. The forested ridge system of the Overmeyer Hills constitutes the most extensive area of intact upland forest in the state forest and provides an opportunity to maintain this attribute. The site is situated on a Cambrian sandstone ridge rising approximately 300 feet above the surrounding plain, running east to west and extending nearly five miles. Because of the varying topography and associated bedrock of this ridge, the site contains several forest types and associated natural communities. The dry southwest facing slopes contain the central sands pine-oak forest natural community, and the northeast facing slopes contain southern dry-mesic forest and northern dry-mesic forest communities. The area is known to contain many rare species including two state threatened vertebrate animals, one state endangered

### AREA 18 SUMMARY

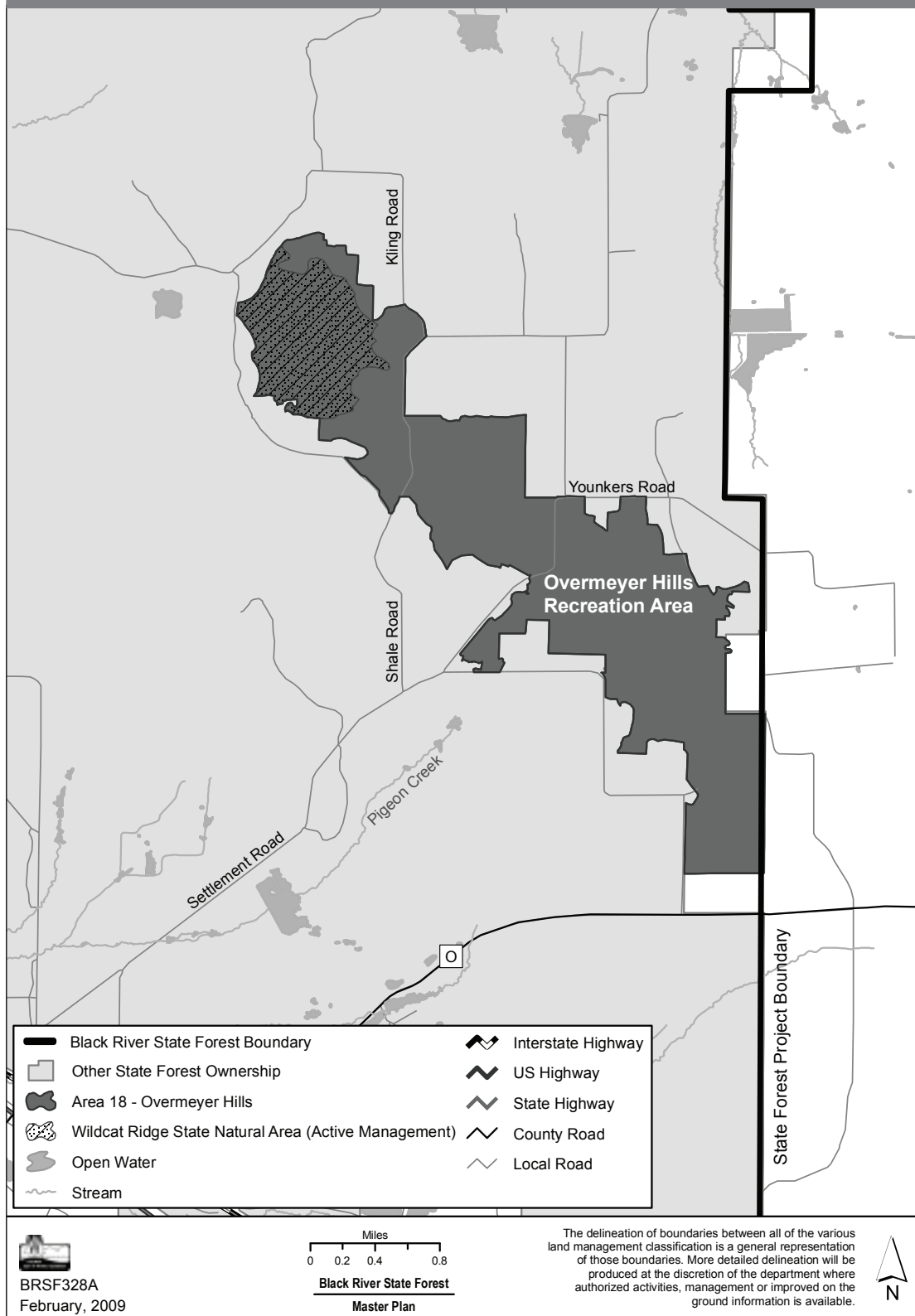
- ▲ Protect and enhance scenic, aesthetic, and recreational values.
- ▲ Maintain and develop older, closed canopy, un-fragmented forest, including potential old forest on north and east slopes.
- ▲ Protect, manage, and enhance habitat for key species identified in the Biotic Inventory.
- ▲ Designate a 379 acre State Natural Area.

### AREA 18 LOCATOR MAP





MAP 2.24 OVERMEYER HILLS





plant, and numerous Species of Greatest Conservation Need and Species of Special Concern. The area is known to contain many area sensitive forest interior birds.

### Description of the Forest Resource

The most common timber type is oak and, to a lesser extent, jack pine, red pine, and white pine. Several red pine plantations also occur within the area. Logging has been somewhat limited here within the last 25 years because the site was designated the "Overmeyer Hills Wild Area" in the 1983 Master Plan. This designation was primarily meant to protect the aesthetic values of the site.

### Long-Term Management Objectives (100 years)

Maintain and enhance silent sports recreation opportunities within a relatively extensive acreage of older, intact, connected forest that provides aesthetic appeal. Maintain an old forest of red maple, pine, mixed hardwood, and oak species that is structurally and functionally diverse and includes areas of coarse woody debris and standing dead snags.

### Short-Term Management Objectives (50 years)

- Provide a system of aesthetically pleasing, sustainable trails for hiking, cross-country skiing and mountain biking that offer opportunities for quiet enjoyment of the forest.
- Develop and maintain an older, closed canopy, un-fragmented forest of longer-lived species such as red maple, red and white pine, and oak on north and east slopes.
- Enhance forest structural diversity and development of old forest characteristics, such as large diameter trees, standing dead snags, and coarse woody debris where appropriate.
- Protect, manage, and enhance the natural communities for ecological values and rare species habitat needs identified in the Biotic Inventory.

FIGURE 2.19 OVERMEYER HILLS  
CURRENT LAND COVER

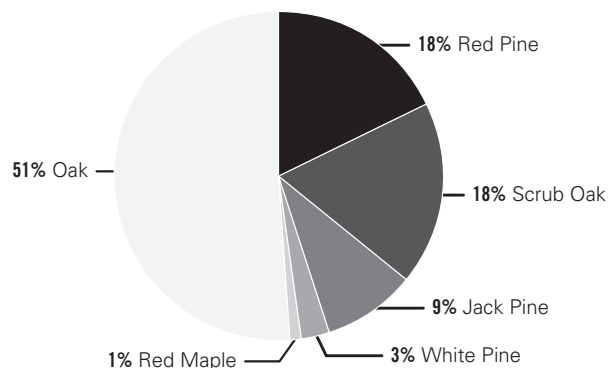


TABLE 2.23 OVERMEYER HILLS  
CURRENT AND PREDICTED LAND COVER

Cover Type	CURRENT		PREDICTED 50 YEAR	
	Acres	% Total	Acres	% Total
<b>Forested Types</b>				
Oak	1,146	51%	974	43%
Red Pine	414	18%	394	18%
Scrub Oak	398	18%	340	15%
Jack Pine	193	9%	193	9%
White Pine	59	3%	139	6%
Red Maple	31	1%	201	9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,241</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>2,241</b>	<b>100%</b>



**Area Specific Resource Management Prescriptions**

- Maintain oak through commercial thinning, timber stand improvement practices, prescribed fire, and other techniques described in the DNR Silviculture and Forest Aesthetics Handbook.
- Promote the growth and retention of large oak and pines through techniques such as thinning, extended rotation, and managed old forest. Follow the DNR Old Growth and Old Forest Handbook, particularly related to Managed Old-Forest.
- Retain snags and coarse woody debris to promote old growth characteristics whenever their retention does not present hazards or conflict with other forest management activities.
- Conduct forest management activities in ways that minimize visual, noise, and access impacts to recreational users.
- Implement aesthetic management prescriptions along trails consistent with the DNR Silviculture and Forest Aesthetics Handbook guidelines for the Class A Aesthetic Zone.
- Designate the 379 acre Wildcat Ridge State Natural Area.
- Control of invasive species may occur.
- Remove hazard trees to provide a safe setting for recreational users.

**Area Specific Recreation Management Prescriptions**

- Install electrical service at the warming shelter located at the Smrekar Trail parking lot.
- Abandon the existing well along the Central Loop trail system and install a new well and accessible hand pump at the trailhead located at the Smrekar Trail parking lot.
- Construct a new storage facility at the Smrekar Trail parking lot and abandon the storage facility at the Wildcat Trail parking lot.





## AREA 19: CAMPGROUNDS AND DAY USE AREAS

This 155 acre recreation management area is comprised of five campgrounds and several day use facilities scattered throughout the property (Table 2.24). A variety of amenities, such as picnic areas, swimming, playground equipment, shelters, and outdoor cooking grills, are provided for visitor use and vary depending on site. Day use facilities are also found at the Castle Mound, Pigeon Creek, and East Fork Campgrounds. These areas offer opportunities and amenities for relatively intensive recreational uses and activities, and are classified as Type 4 Recreational Use Settings (NR 44.07).

This section addresses the management of forest and land resources within the recreation areas. A separate Recreation Management section within this chapter addresses the changes to facilities within these areas.

### Description of the Forest Resource

The campground and day use areas consist of facilities and infrastructure in both open and wooded areas.

### Long-Term Management Objectives (100 years)

Maintain the area as an attractive and safe setting for intensive types of recreational use, such as camping, picnicking, water sports, trail activities, and nature interpretation. In forested areas, maintain a mixed forest dominated by older, larger trees.

### AREA 19 SUMMARY

- ▲ Protect and enhance scenic, aesthetic, and recreational values.
- ▲ Maintain and enhance forest resources and open areas in a way that is compatible with adjacent management areas.
- ▲ Ensure user safety by removing dead or other hazard trees and vegetation.

TABLE 2.24 CAMPGROUNDS AND DAY USE AREAS

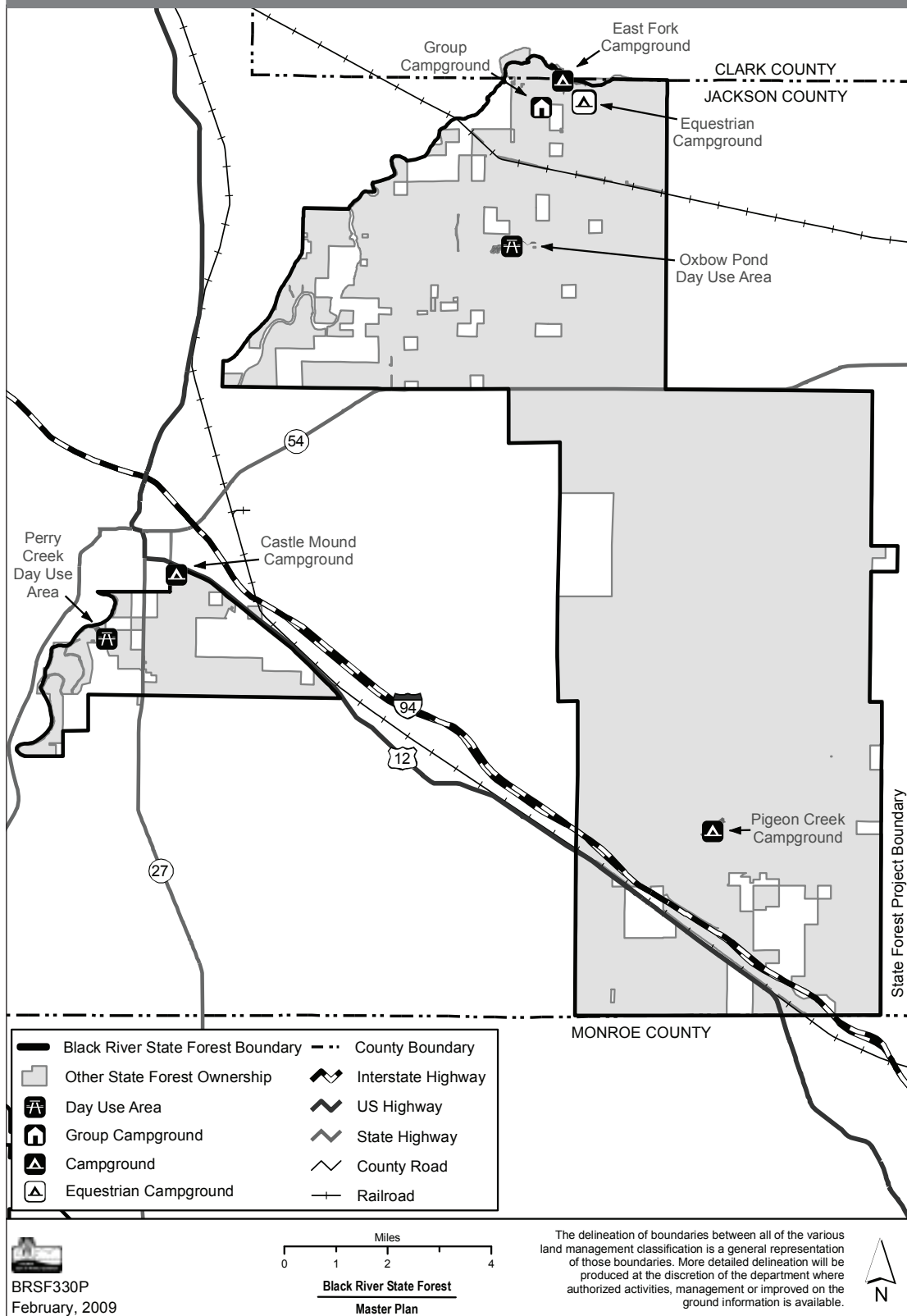
Facility	Acres
Castle Mound Campground	39
Pigeon Creek Campground	33
East Fork Campground	25
Equestrian Campground	8
Group Campground	13
Perry Creek Day Use Area	7
Oxbow Pond Day Use Area	30



## CAMPGROUNDS AND DAY USE AREAS

AREA  
**19**

MAP 2.25 CAMPGROUNDS AND DAY USE AREAS







### Short-Term Management Objectives (50 years)

- Provide opportunities for safe, high quality, modern, intensive recreational uses featuring modern camping, primitive camping, day uses, nature interpretation/education, and a variety of trail uses during different seasons.
- Favor longer-lived, larger tree species such as white and red pine and oak species.

### Area Specific Resource Management Prescriptions

- Conduct forest management activities at times and in ways that will minimize visual, noise, and access impacts to recreational users.
- Implement aesthetic management prescriptions along trails consistent with the DNR Silviculture and Forest Aesthetics Handbook guidelines for the Class A Aesthetic Zone.
- Control invasive species at campgrounds and day use areas.
- Provide and maintain screening between campsites using native vegetation.
- Remove hazard trees to provide a safe setting for recreational users.

### Area Specific Recreation Management Prescriptions

- Increase the number of electric campsites at the Castle Mound Campground, up to a maximum of 28 sites.
- Construct a new office and a new shop building at the Castle Mound Campground.
- Evaluate the opportunity to convert the existing office building into an ADA accessible cabin for the Castle Mound Campground.
- Eliminate vault toilets at the Castle Mound Campground and replace with a modern shower and restroom facility.
- Install an ADA accessible parking area and walkway at the Pigeon Creek Campground.
- Upgrade nature trail and interpretive signage and add an informational kiosk at the East Fork Campground.
- Install a manure storage facility and a woodshed, and improve directional and information signage at the Equestrian Campground.
- Replace or remove the vault toilets at the Group Camp (a restroom will still be available in the indoor group facility).
- Evaluate the need for an expanded parking area at Pigeon Creek after Robinson Beach is closed to public vehicle access.

